United Nations S/2001/9

Security Council

Distr.: General
4 January 2001
English
Original: French

Letter dated 4 January 2001 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Today, 4 January 2001, as the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo commemorate with the deepest solemnity the forty-second anniversary of the martyrdom of the founding fathers of Congolese independence, they find it particularly painful to continue to suffer, at the dawn of the third millennium, from the indignity of being ruled with complete impunity in their own country since 2 August 1998 by Rwandan and Ugandan occupants who are apparently doing so with the tacit approval of the international community.

On instructions from my Government, I regret to have to draw the attention of the Security Council to the following extremely serious facts.

Since the weekend of the new year, battles have been raging between the regular armed forces of Rwanda and Uganda in the town of Banalia to the north of Kisangani in the Bafwasende area of Oriental Province. This resumption of fighting between the regular troops of the aggressor countries in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is occurring after an initial clash in Banalia in November 2000 and the three wars of Kisangani, which are painfully engraved in our memory.

The objective of these clashes is well known. As in Kisangani, the general aim of the fighting in Banalia is to secure control over the natural resources of the area, specifically gold and diamond mining. According to a variety of independent sources, including the Catholic Church and Radio France Internationale, about 20 people have died so far.

The weekend of the new year was also marked by the challenge of the authority of the Security Council by the highest Ugandan and Rwandan authorities which vowed not to withdraw their troops from the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in accordance with Security Council resolutions 1304 (2000) of 16 June 2000 and 1332 (2000) of 14 December 2000.

By explicitly accusing the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Security Council of failing to honour their commitments and to dispatch observers and troops to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda and Uganda will have succeeded in discrediting the entire United Nations in the absence of an appropriate response.

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The statements of the Rwandan President and of his foreign policy adviser constitute dangerous arguments designed to "legalize" Rwanda's irredentist designs concerning the Congolese provinces of Northern and Southern Kivu and Maniema.

The obvious goal of all these new and sordid manoeuvres by Uganda and Rwanda is to prevent the effective deployment of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MOMUC) as provided for by Security Council resolution 1332 (2000) of 14 December 2000 in order to continue their armed aggression against the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the plunder of the country's natural and other resources.

These manoeuvres confirm the manifest will of Uganda and Rwanda to remain in the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo forever. They also constitute a flagrant violation of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement, the Kampala disengagement plan and the disengagement and redeployment plans that those two countries freely signed and which are all aimed at achieving an effective ceasefire and the acceleration of the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

In view of the foregoing, my Government wishes to request an emergency meeting of the Security Council on the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo with the following objectives in mind:

1. To rule, in accordance with Article 40 of the Charter of the United Nations, on the public refusal of Uganda and Rwanda to respect Council resolutions 1304 (2000) of 16 June 2000 and 1332 (2000) of 14 December 2000 which call upon them to withdraw their forces from the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo;

2. To call for the immediate withdrawal of Ugandan and Rwandan troops in accordance with Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, Security Council resolution 1304 (2000) of 16 June 2000 as reaffirmed by Council resolution 1332 (2000) of 14 December 2000;

3. To accompany its demand for the withdrawal of Ugandan and Rwandan troops from the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo with appropriate coercive measures as permitted by Article 39, 41 and 42 of the Charter of the United Nations, including:

(a) An international embargo on the direct or indirect delivery, sale or transfer of arms to the Governments of Uganda and Rwanda;

(b) An economic, trade and financial blockade applicable to the Governments of Uganda and Rwanda;

(c) The freezing of diplomatic relations between the Governments of the States Members of the United Nations and the Governments of Uganda and Rwanda.

My Government requests the Security Council to do its utmost to prevent the disintegration of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

My Government wishes to recall the heavy price that the Congolese people have already paid in terms of massacres, rapes, repeated violations of human rights and international humanitarian law perpetrated by Uganda and Rwanda on the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It also requests the Council to accompany the Congolese people in their search for a dialogue in order to permit them to achieve national reconciliation.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Atoki **Ileka**
Minister Counsellor
Chargé d'affaires a.i.